

Office of the Governor

March 12, 2008

The Chairman and Commissioners
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Room TW-A306
Washington, DC 02544

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Chairman Martin and Commissioners Copps, Adelstein, Tate and McDowell:

On February 15, 2008, the Wyoming Public Service Commission filed a Petition for Waiver of Filing Deadline for Rate Comparability Certification in CC Docket No. 96-45. I support the petition and urge the Commission to grant it.

Absent the grant of this waiver, the late filing of Wyoming's 2008 Residential Rate Comparability Certification will permanently deprive several eligible telecommunications carriers, their customers, and Wyoming of over \$3 million in Universal Service Fund High Cost Model support for the first quarter of 2008. If not for the late filing of the certification, the carriers would have received this support. Receipt of this support is particularly significant given the rural nature of our state and our small population.

The waiver sought by the Wyoming PSC does not try to expand the fund and it does not create any newly eligible carriers. It only seeks to correct an unfortunate procedural error that would impede a very important core function of the Fund and harm Wyoming telecommunications carriers and their customers in the process.

Although there are many calls for reform of the Universal Service Fund driven by a sincere desire to control its growth, the fundamental purposes of the Fund must be advanced. The payment of the High Cost Model support, although interrupted by the Wyoming PSC's late filing, is consistent with those fundamental purposes, and could have no detrimental effect on the Fund, it having been fully contemplated in assessments and projections made in the regular course of business. The USAC has set aside the money necessary to make these needed payments.

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I urge you to act favorably on the Wyoming Public Service Commission's petition.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dave Freudenthal", written in a cursive style.

Dave Freudenthal
Governor

DF:RH:pjb

c: Senator Mike Enzi
Senator John Barrasso
Representative Barbara Cubin
Wyoming Public Service Commission